

Individual Responsibility for Missions
to the Heathen.

A SERMON



PREACHED AT THE

CELEBRATION OF THE JUBILEE
OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

IN

ST JAMES'S EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, EDINBURGH,

OCTOBER 26, 1848.

BY

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TO THE

VERY REV. EDWARD B. RAMSAY, M.A.,

DEAN OF THE DIOCESE OF EDINBURGH,

AND TO THE

REV. JOHN W. FERGUSON, M.A.,

CLERK TO THE DIOCESAN SYNOD,

WHO HAVE SO KINDLY WELCOMED HIM TO THEIR FELLOWSHIP, ALTHOUGH BEARING NO OTHER RECOMMENDATION THAN THE NAME OF THE SISTER CHURCH IN AMERICA; AND TO WHOSE FRIENDSHIP HE OWES SO MUCH OF THE HAPPINESS OF HIS UNEXPECTED SOJOURN,

This Discourse

IS RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR BROTHER IN THE MINISTRY,

G. THURSTON BEDELL.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord; grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which thou hast prepared for those who unfeignedly love thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collect for All-Saints' Day.

PREFATORY NOTICE.

THE Jubilee of the CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, which has excited so much interest in England and various parts of Scotland, was celebrated in St James's Chapel, Edinburgh, on the 26th of October, 1848. Morning Prayer was read by the Rev. John W. Ferguson, M.A., Minister of the Chapel, assisted by the Rev. George Coventry, B.D. The Offertory was read, and the Service concluded, by the Very Rev. Edward B. Ramsay, M.A., the Dean of the Diocese. There were present also of the clergy, the Rev. P. Kelland, Rev. John A. White, Rev. F. Tonkin, Rev. E. B. Field. In compliance with the request of the minister of the chapel, the Sermon was preached by the Rev. G. Thurston Bedell, A.M., of New York, one of the members of the Committee for Foreign Missions of the Board of Missions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. It seemed a peculiarly happy illustration of the reality of fellowship and communion between the Protestant Episcopal Churches, that the Jubilee of a Society of the Church of England should be celebrated by members of the Scottish Episcopal Church, associated with, and aided by, a member of the Episcopal Church in America. There was a large congregation of the laity, and the collection was very liberal. At the request of the clergy and the vestry of the chapel who were present, the Sermon is now printed.

ISAIAH LX.

RISE, crown'd with light, imperial Salem, rise;
Exalt thy towering head and lift thine eyes:
See heaven its sparkling portals wide display,
And break upon thee in a flood of day.

See a long race thy spacious courts adorn,
See future sons and daughters, yet unborn,
In crowding ranks on every side arise,
Demanding life, impatient for the skies.

See barbarous nations at thy gates attend,
Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend:
See thy bright altars throng'd with prostrate kings,
While every land its joyous tribute brings.

The seas shall waste, the skies to smoke decay,
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away;
But fixed His word, His saving power remains;
Thy realm shall last, thy own Messiah reigns.

SERMON.

“A man turned aside and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man. And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone.”—1 KINGS XX. 39, 40.

THE parable, of which the text forms a part, was addressed by an ancient seer to Ahab king of Israel. It was intended to reprove his dereliction of duty, in dismissing from custody a man whom the providence of God had committed to his trust.

We have chosen the words as directly applicable to our present subject. As we shall hope to show you, they accurately represent, on the one hand, our responsibility to God for the salvation of certain among the heathen, and, on the other, the unsatisfactory manner in which we generally discharge the duty. We must endeavour, with God's blessing, to attain some accurate sense of this responsibility before we can hope more faithfully to fulfil this trust.

The essential *expansiveness and diffusiveness of the religion we profess* have decided both the propriety and obligation of the missionary work. Chris-

tianity, by its characteristic universality, is signally contrasted with all other religious systems. The influence of all those other forms in which the spirit of man has expressed its conscious need of God has been limited, either by the peculiar purposes of their origin, or by the peculiarities of the intellectual and social condition which they indicate.

The sacred polity born at the foot of Mount Sinai was necessarily confined, as intended, to the Israelites. Its local laws; the sacred seal of its covenant; the earnest love of a soil consecrated by the footsteps of the pilgrim Abraham, which it commended and encouraged; its constant preaching and symbolic foreshadowing of Messiah's advent to Judea; and its imperative command, that every believer should yearly tread the precincts of Mount Zion, confined its influence to the inhabitants and the nearest neighbours of the Land of Promise.

The martial prophet of the Koran strove to combine, with institutions which he deemed the source of Jewish attachment to their religion, others that should secure the progress of his own impious delusion. The luxuriousness and sloth of the Oriental character, which he was compelled to consult while forming his scheme, defeated his purpose, and established the natural limits of Mohammedanism. Anticipations of paradise, the reward of the service, could, indeed, carry his singular creed—Unitarianism and his own Messiahship—at the sword's point, to many distant lands; but the essential adaptation of his faith to the inertness

and sensualism of the Eastern mind soon caused the hordes of the Koran to shrink back to their natural boundaries ; where, within a comparatively easy journey to Mecca, and unaroused by contact with the inquiring and energetic nations of the West, they have, for centuries, dreamed away their lives, and listlessly resigned themselves to a blind fatalism. Such a system, as it could not have had birth, so it could not have maintenance among any earnest people, inquisitive lovers of the truth. Similar remarks apply to false religions, retaining still less of the truths contained in the Adamic revelation.

The polytheistic system of the Greek, deifying the graces and qualities of the mind, and consecrating amusements, poetry, and arts, to the service of religion, in every part instinct with that life which merely human reason may bestow, and crowded with those beautiful forms which the merely human spirit can create, was the offspring of the intellectual character of that nation. It could not exist among duller souls, where the intellect had not yet burst from its thralldom to the senses.

The religious economy of the Roman, on the contrary, partook of the masculine spirit of his political system. He deified the social and civil virtues. He consecrated an altar on his hearthstone. He dedicated his triumphs to the honour of his deities. His religion was an integral part of the system which made him master of the world. But the same causes which induced him to cherish his religion as his own, indisposed him to extend its

influence. If it would ennoble his vassals, it were impolitic to teach them its blessings; and, unless to elevate their character and strengthen their power, it were useless to disturb a faith for which he could offer no valuable substitute.

Thus, too, the senseless worship of the Fetiche; the religious ablutions, and the monstrous idols of the Hindoo; the garden and river gods of Egypt; and the more refined but puerile superstitions and sacrifices of the Chinese: each system bears an impression of localness: beyond its natural limits it could find no votaries.

With all these Christianity is strongly contrasted. While their influence must be local, hers must be universal. While each of them is framed for one character of mind, as exhibited under one form of cultivation, or influenced by one modification of climate, she addresses herself to every mind, in every degree of education, under every sun. For while, in their additions to ancient truth, they are offsprings of the intellect or the passions of men, she is wholly heaven-born. Her spirit is not bound by material forms; cannot be reached through material emblems. The instructed Greek no longer smiles at uncouth representations, by which an unlettered Hindoo, imbued with her spirit, strives to embody her life-giving power; nor does the untutored savage wonder at forms of majesty and grace, by which the more civilized recipient of her bounties portrays his conception of their Divine source. Hers is a spiritual worship of the spiritually All-Present. Christianity has no castes.

She knows no sovereign priests inseparable from the soil which they rule with spiritual tyranny. Her ministry are itinerant servants of a Master who sends them where and when He will; and that ministry is constituted a complete polity, ever readily adjusted, and suited to every mode of civil government under which her lost children may be found. The seals of her covenant, the pledges of her grace, the emblems of her blessings, may be administered under every constellation of the firmament. Nor has she any partial instructions, nor mysteries into which only the initiated may approach. Her truths are all revealed for the world. They utter themselves in a universal language. And her great central truth, round which all cluster, from which all are illumined, is as much the central truth of the system in Hindostan as in Canterbury. The furred Greenlander, the Indian hunter, the tattooed Otaheitian, bows with us before the same Master, gathers wisdom from the same great truth, feels the inspiration and the power of the one great fact, that Christ was crucified.

Thus, Christianity, by the expansiveness and diffusiveness which are the very essence of her being, not only determines the propriety and obligation, but proclaims the *necessity* of the missionary work.

The *course of prophetic history* has determined both these questions. The history of the future is as present to the mind of God as are the records of the past—equally certain, though its events be not as distinctly discernible to us. Yet what is clearly foretold we may receive as grounds of our reason-

ing, and sure guides of action. We read that the kingdoms of this world are yet to be given to our Lord Jesus Christ. We read that the despised and broken branch of Israel must yet be grafted again into its own olive-tree. And, once more, we read that, as a precedent of these events, the gospel must be preached for a witness in every nation. Now, however we may differ as to the instrumentality by which either of the former events will be effected, we cannot differ as to the fact that human agencies, such as are at present exerted in this world-field, must effect the other. This gospel of the kingdom, even now proclaimed almost universally, must yet be preached for a witness to the truth before every people of the world. "How," then, "shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?"

Thus, prophetic history not only determines the propriety and obligation, but proclaims the *necessity* of the missionary work.

The *command of our Saviour* has determined both these questions. The universality of Christ's religion, characterising its scheme, and anticipated by its prophetic history, is demanded by its express precept. Our Saviour did not intrust the progress of his gospel to the inferences of his disciples. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," his parting injunction, is imperative upon his Church, as though it were a law from Sinai. But the Church, in this regard, what is it? Surely not that bodyless phantom which some imagine; a certain ecclesiastical wraith

to be conjured at will, within the mist of which individual Christian responsibility may be indefinitely divided, and absolutely lost. The Church which receives that word of its sovereign Head, is the congregation of faithful people; in our Saviour's time present upon Olivet, and represented by its apostolic pastors; in our Saviour's omniscient sight, then present in all "those who" should "believe in" Him "through their word." Nor is it possible for the Church, give it what definition you will, to become obedient to this injunction, unless its members feel their individual responsibility, and individually offer their earnest co-operation. Though all the constituted ecclesiastical authorities in Christendom should sleep, the command would not lie dormant. When the Saviour enters into judgment with his Church, the blessing or the woe will light upon individuals. And for the consummation of his merciful purposes to the world, he enjoins—if, indeed, his grace will not wait for—the unanimous co-labouring of souls whom he has saved. Then is full obedience rendered by a Church, when every Christian member feels his personal responsibility, and all acting upon all, by sympathy and mutual co-operation, the pastors leading and encouraging, the people fellow-helpers, the leaven leavening the whole lump, the light spreading as it is reflected from every heart, the influence, combining and collected, is manifested by consenting energetic effort, as the voice, the will, the act of the Church. But let no individual wait for such an illustration of obedience to Christ. The Saviour's command

imposes a personal responsibility; and thus, that command not only determines the propriety and obligation, but proclaims the *necessity* of the missionary work.

The *universal acknowledgment of the Church* has determined both these questions. This is the era of missionary principle, as a former was the age of missionary enthusiasm. The progress of missionary effort no longer depends upon uncertain and unsteady impulses. It is a constant efflux of Christian love, through well defined and well tried channels. It is no longer the expression of individual feeling, but of acknowledged ecclesiastical obligation. Every considerable body of Christians, more or less distinctly and efficiently, has assumed the missionary work upon principle. It was not always so. The years which have given birth to such a result themselves sprang out of a period very destitute in enterprises of enlarged Christian benevolence.

The season is opportune for a retrospect.

We remember in our prayers and thanksgivings this day, that the present year is the Jubilee of the Church of England Missionary Society. Seven weeks of years have been numbered since the venerated fathers of this institution associated for the purpose of preaching the gospel to the heathen. Encompassed by difficulties, disturbed by fears, uninspired by large expectations—for the work was still wholly of faith—and properly unwilling, without the approbation of their chief pastors, to undertake so great a charge, in which the Church of England could not but be involved, five years elapsed before they

commenced their missionary work. At the close of the last century the missionary spirit of the Church seemed almost expiring. Yet we are not to imagine that those individuals, in whose breasts the latent fire was first enkindled to a flame, were gifted with a new Christian virtue. They had not discovered some novel Christian principle, nor invented an application of Christian benevolence. Christ has never left his Church destitute of missionaries. It would have been the sealing of her death-warrant. In the very age when Reformed and Protestant truths were securing a firm foothold, amidst the earthquake of opinions, and the tottering of error, the missionary spirit discovered some of its noblest triumphs in the heroic enterprises of Romish priests. When the era of Jesuit missions was past, and the betrayal of their trust had invoked deserved disgrace and ruin, a little band of persecuted Protestants from Moravia, themselves refugees in friendly Saxony, presented an illustrious exhibition of the missionary principle. The United Brethren were but six hundred poor people of Christ, when they commissioned their ministers to labour in distant lands. When persecution and disease effected a vacancy in the self-denying band, the strife at home was always for the privilege of venturing for Christ's sake. And the reward of their devoted energy was the gathering, among the heathen, a Church one hundred times as large as the original Church at home. Nor, indeed, did the Church of England, through individual enterprises alone, exhibit her missionary spirit during the difficult years of the last century,

out of which the civil and ecclesiastical polity of the kingdom emerged confirmed and vigorous.

It were a flagrant want of gratitude did I, even in so rapid a sketch, omit a passing tribute to that noble institution, which, throughout the last century, followed closely the advance of British colonisation, endeavouring ever to plant the English Church beside the English standard. That its accomplishments were at all unequal to its purposes was the fault of the age. But had it effected no other result than the firm implanting of Protestant Episcopal principles in the hearts of my countrymen, it received a full reward. A whole Church in the West, which, under God, owes its existence to their fostering care, has risen up to bless the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

Yet, certainly, the close of the last century witnessed a sudden impulse given to Christian benevolence. Religious enthusiasm took, not indeed a new, but an unusual direction, and outburst in efforts for the conversion of the heathen. Bodies of Christians, under all the names by which they were associated for the worship of God, commenced the missionary work. The Church of England, and (although at a little later period) the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, gladly yielded to this new direction of Christian energy. Baptists, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Methodists, Reformed Churches, in Scotland, in England, on the Continent, and in America, either singly, or, as in the case of the American Board of

Commissioners for Foreign Missions, by a combination of various denominations, exhibited the impulsive character of that stirring period.

This was the noted era which gave rise to the institution whose Jubilee we celebrate. Partaking the common animation of the religious mind; aroused to activity by reports of heathen destitution and missionary success, brought to them by Christians already in the field; persuaded that the time had come for the Church of England, if not by her Convocation, at least by the collective energies of her members, to take her place in the work, such men as Cecil and John Newton, Venn and Scott, Thornton and Wilberforce—men noted for their enlarged philanthropy, and their consistent attachment to the Church, as well as for their humble and ardent piety—consulted, and laid the foundation of that pile, whose superstructure, reared by a faith unfailling that worked through love to Christ and souls, cemented by a constant charity, and blessed beyond measure and beyond hope by the approval of the Holy Ghost, in this *fiftieth* year, in fair proportions, compact and glorious, calls forth the expression of our praise to God. How marvellous the contrast to those early days of doubt and hesitation on the one side, coldness and suspicion on the other, through which the Society pursued its feeble way! In this *fiftieth* year, it is patronised by the highest authorities of the Church, commended by the nobles, supported by contributions from every quarter of the kingdom; at home, acknowledged as a faithful and efficient almoner of

the Church ; abroad, regarded as a noble expositor of British benevolence ; in heathendom, known and loved for its fourteen hundred Christian teachers, its thirteen thousand communicants, and its twenty-four thousand scholars ; for its due deference to Episcopal authority and discipline in those distant lands—its unwavering attachment to the pure gospel, as expounded in the formularies of the Church ; for its pledges of fidelity and stability in the maintenance of apostolical order ; and for its liberal annual distribution of one hundred thousand pounds in missionary efforts. “How has the little one become a thousand, and the small one a strong people!” It “is the Lord’s doing,” and “marvellous in our eyes.” And while we thank Him for the human instruments by which He has been pleased to work, and praise Him for what He has wrought, we take courage to hope for the future, and labour on—O that He may grant it!—with a consuming zeal.

Doubtless, the impulse of this movement was felt beyond the Atlantic. If it is true in nature, that the force which sets a ripple in motion upon the surface of the mighty deep is never expended until the wave has broken upon the farthest shore, how much more readily may we believe, that no impulse given to the quickly answering sympathies of souls who are one in Christ Jesus is expended, until it reaches the heart of every saint in the Catholic communion. The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States was then struggling for existence. Yet it was a true Church, and the Spirit of Christ was there. Ere long, a band of

noble-hearted men dared, even there, to look beyond the bounds of their own parishes, into a world destitute of the truth. The necessary consequence was the formation of a Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society. Its labours in the west of our own continent, and in foreign lands, were feeble and slowly progressive. Nor should I mention them at all, especially on such a day, and in comparison with the gigantic efforts of British Christians, did I feel at liberty to decline the request with which I shall now endeavour to comply. The theme is congenial with my feelings, and, if I mistake not, it may furnish one lesson at least—perhaps I am presumptuous—a *lesson* for our Mother Churches of Scotland and England.

The Voluntary Association followed the footsteps of our emigrants to the west, planting missionary stations among them, and among the neglected Indian tribes. It seized also the advantage enjoyed by Americans during the peace that followed the desolating war of independence in Greece, and established a missionary school in Athens. It is little to say of this effort, that it has won the approbation of all discerning travellers. The government vies with the people in showing it confidence and affection; and not without reason we hope, that, by its educated and enlightened scholars, it is infusing a religious element into, and elevating, and, under God, renewing, the character of the people. Our national debt to Africa was not forgotten; and one of the earliest missionary schools of the society was established at Cape Palmas, on the western coast.

Amidst many hindrances, and enormous sacrifice of life, that mission is now transforming into a Christian Church, the formerly degraded objects of its care.

But estimating results, as we must, comparatively, a still more important effect of the efforts of this society was a gradual elevation of the missionary tone of the Church, and finally a general infusion of the missionary spirit. The General Convention, our great representative council, speaking the voice of the whole body, adopted the society as its own, absorbed its distinctive features, and resolved the whole Protestant Episcopal communion into a missionary society. It was a bold step; one of those ventures which it is often well to make for Christ's sake. And, since the commencement of Moravian missions, I know not where a nobler spectacle has been presented; bishops, presbyters, and laymen (apostles, elders, and brethren), a whole Church appreciating the Saviour's command, confessing the obligation, and becoming a *Missionary Church*. From that hour, it has gone forth as a giant refreshed; at home, increasing the number of missionaries, of dioceses, and of bishops; abroad, strengthening the existing missions, and forming others. A series of efforts have been in progress, and a missionary bishop commissioned to enlighten the decayed Churches of the East. And a mission has been sent, rather a Church has been planted, in one of the cities of China, which British power, by the providence of God, has opened to us. For, as the Church was the missionary society, she had

authority to commission the Church in its integrity for missionary duty. We have now four missionary bishops: two labouring in the western dioceses; two in foreign parts. The bishop at Shanghai, in China, has built his school-houses, his mission premises, and his Christian church. Children of both sexes have been admitted to the schools, and, being legally indentured for ten years, should God spare his life, the bishop will have the sole charge of their education. The belief is not unreasonable, that from among those natives competent missionaries will be supplied; and, whenever God shall *call* them by his Spirit, the *authoritative commission* will not be wanting. The bishop is now taking an active and most important share in the labours incident to the new translation of the Scriptures. The British and Foreign Bible Society have determined on this enterprise, and all the Protestant missionaries in China are engaged in its accomplishment. *Now* should there have been a bishop of the Church of England, and—may not I say it with due deference?—a bishop of the Church of Scotland, with their earnest faithful bands of instructed missionaries, to guard (it is the high commission of their Church) and to preserve the Word of God. Other men have entered on their labours: let not these win all the prizes.

While our Church has thus, the first of Protestant Churches, trusted a complete apostolical organisation in a wholly missionary work, with no other dependence than the voluntary offerings of Christ's people, its labours at home have been blessed abundantly. It now numbers thirty-one dioceses,

domestic and foreign, thirty-one bishops, and fourteen hundred clergymen, pastors and missionaries. Yet is it a poor Church: the clergy, in general, as much scattered as your own, and receiving salaries which, except in the large towns, will average less than your small minimum stipend.

What might not the Scottish Episcopal Church effect?—bear with me, while I thus apply the subject to your own privileged and responsible condition: for your Church, sixty-four years ago, took compassion upon our destitution, and consecrated our first bishop; and therefore is ours a debt of gratitude not to be paid, unless, indeed, the reflex influence of the example of the Church which you then confirmed should now encourage you to missionary exertions at home and abroad, that will win for you the favour, and increase upon you the blessings of our sovereign Lord. What might you not accomplish, if, under the impulse of individual love to Christ, you made a united effort in the faith of God as a missionary Church?

Returning from this digression: Such facts establish our position. Missionary results are no longer the offspring of impulsive and unconnected individual benevolence. The bodies of Christians into which Protestant Christendom is divided have become missionary. The Church of England itself, in part represented by its Episcopal Board for erecting Colonial Bishoprics, in part by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and in part by the Church Missionary Society, exhibits, what the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United

States was the first to proclaim, and every body of Christians engaged in missionary enterprises now recognises—the operation of an established *church missionary principle*.

Thus, the common consent and consistent action of the Church, have now not only determined the propriety and obligation, but affirmed the *necessity* of the missionary work.

The *sin of our fathers*, for which we yet suffer, the *unwavering national aggrandisement*, and the *commercial enterprise* of Great Britain, have decided both these questions.

The sin of our fathers, for which we yet suffer. I use a peculiar language, for I claim a melancholy sympathy with you when I argue the cause of missions on this ground. Ours is an equal sympathy in the responsibility, for, at that period, both nations were one. The sin was the act of Parliament, in the reign of George III., for planting colonies upon the African coast, in the very words of the deed, “for the encouragement, protection, and defence of the slave-trade.” Never did national sin more surely visit its plagues upon the children of many generations. Never did national act impose a more certain responsibility for reparation upon each future generation, until, by unnumbered blessings heaped upon an injured race, they have buried the memory of the foul injustice. The abrogation of the statute, and the condemnation of the slave-trade—how intimately are they associated with the honoured name of Wilberforce, the first president of this society!—these were acts

of national justice, by which, so far as legislation can, the wrong has been remedied. But an impulse and apology have been given to evil, which will be long remembered. Wronged Africa, by her outward miseries, and the more fatal wounds of her spirit, pleads now with the Christians of Great Britain for that only effectual redress which, by the superabounding of the grace, may cause her to forget the ruin—an effectual ministration of the gospel.

The unwavering national aggrandisement of Great Britain. It is not my desire to point you to any evils which may have occurred to the natives in the course of the progress of that mighty empire, which now claims as subjects one-seventh of the inhabitants of this world. But when I look at the catastrophes which have followed each advance of American emigration upon the Indian tribes; when I see how these have scattered and fallen, like the leaves of their forests before the storm-blasts of winter; when I see how they have disappeared at the contact with the white man, as snow-wreaths of our mountains at the touch of the summer's sun; when I now mark the remnants in their degradation, with scarce a trace of their glory; and, when I know that all this has occurred notwithstanding the earnest exertions of our Government, and the efforts of our frontier army to protect and preserve them; I cannot suppose that the aggrandisement of this great nation has been without accumulated evils upon the feeble tribes of the eastern world. Have the Hindoo, and the Chinese, and the Bushman, and

the Australian, yet learned to bless the powerful hand which makes them acquainted with European civilisation? Nay, does an Australian remain to accept the blessings which British colonisation is to bestow? Do not these nations demand of you that which, in the providence of God, you alone can confer, the priceless blessings for which, indeed, they might well give all their broad acres in exchange—a knowledge of the comfortable gospel of the Son of God?

The commercial enterprise of Great Britain. It has traversed every land; it has spread its sails in every sea; it has trafficked on every shore; it has unfurled the cross in every port—and everywhere it has carried spiritual death. We speak confidently: not only from the testimony given by your own writers: on this subject, while Americans are equally guilty, American experience is equally the experience of the elder, but not more earnest, enterprising, or more scrupulous commerce of Great Britain. Your emigrants have scattered themselves, until the English tongue is heard in the remotest corners of the earth. To what port have they carried the sterling morality and the devout religion of the mother land? Nay: have you not, in almost every case, exposed them to the assaults of infidelity, and the wickedness of their own hearts, without those spiritual guides and defences which, at home, were their safeguards? Wherever, then, they have won their way amongst aboriginal tribes, they have sown the seeds of vice and irreligion; and, while disturbing a simple faith, implanting

only doubts and fears. Surely the testimony is true: "More than any nation, we have been brought into contact with the tribes of the pagan world; with our commerce and colonisation we have visited every coast, with a charge, indeed, to bless, but—must we not confess it?—in reality to curse." And what was written concerning the early colonisation of India may surely describe the sad result of almost all European contact with idolatries: "The Hindoo learnt to deem that we had no religion, and that no considerable modes of faith existed among men except the two which divide the population of Hindostan." As you have gone from port to port, almost, if indeed at this time not quite, encircling the western continent; compassing Africa in pursuit of the precious things which almost every mile of her coast may furnish; girdling the globe in search of luxuries of the eastern Indies; a curse has been left on every shore. Everywhere is the foot-print of greatness: but it is a greatness without God. Everywhere the impress of Christianity: but Christianity without principle and without religion. And everywhere, the ignorant natives, learning to despise their gods and imitate the Christians, have learned to live with no restraint upon the evil of their hearts. It is a sad and evil picture. But who shall disprove its truth?

Say we not well, then, that the sin of our fathers, your fathers and mine, for which we both yet suffer; the unwavering national aggrandisement, and the commercial enterprise of Great Britain, forbid us to

question the propriety and obligation—proclaim that there rests upon *you* the *necessity*—of the missionary work?

If so, we have gained our point. And now our text may speedily receive its illustration, and make known its force.

Our argument has been eumulative and converging. The essential expansiveness of Christ's religion has declared the necessity, that every one who shares its blessings should illustrate its spirit. The course of prophetic history, while corroborating the truth of this universality of Christ's kingdom, has proclaimed, that whoever lives upon its hopes must labour for their accomplishment. The command of our Saviour is both an exposition of the character of his gospel, and an injunction to every individual who rejoices in his love, that, in his appropriate sphere, and to the extent of his means, opportunities, and responsibilities, he should make known the grace to all for whom Christ died. The consenting adoption of the missionary principle by all living Churches not only confirms our interpretation of the command, but maintains, that the combination of individual effort in the missionary work is the most ready and effectual obedience. And then, the impulse which our ancestors gave to the slave-trade, cursing Africa, the unwavering national aggrandisement, and the commercial enterprise of Great Britain, point distinctly to those very portions of heathendom which the Church Missionary Society has chosen for its field, as those portions concerning which God has given *you*, the

members of this empire, the definite commission, "Keep this man."

These men! They number one hundred millions of *heathen* fellow-subjects! And these are independent of the millions whom your commerce has exposed, and who must, therefore, now feel the mighty influence of your protection.

Your responsibility—nay, you cannot shake it off. These men did not come to you: they did not offer themselves to your guardianship. You journeyed by weary ways, and with much patient toil, and determined intention to meet them, and so took their souls under your Christian keeping. These were the inscrutable ways of Divine Providence. These events were His footsteps. It were well that a nation, thus loaded with souls whom the Lord has committed to her, should mark His goings, and study and suit herself to His wise purposes! Now that the charge is assumed, it is permanent. A Christian nation, bringing itself in contact with a heathen nation, has exerted influences, and assumed responsibilities, which are to measure the national sin and the national righteousness at the judgment of the nation. All national history is closed in time. There is no eternity for such issues. And therefore time has ever witnessed, and shall behold the judgment of every nation. Mercifully has God been pleased to remember the righteous men who have upheld this state by their prayers and labours of love. May He be pleased, by raising up a long succession of prevailing saints, long to preserve the noble fabric in

peace and prosperity, and to make the latter end more glorious than the beginning!

But your *individual responsibility*—there is a judgment-day for that.

Would you measure it? Then must you place yourselves amidst these heathens, and feel their desperate condition. There is no other mode. “As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” That is the principle. Ye must feel with them to understand the duty. You cannot? True! Impossible it is to divest ourselves of those enlightening influences, and that pure morality which, from our infancy, have woven about us a net-work of mercies, separating us from the heathen. Yet for the moment all this must fall. Your spiritual safeguards, your spiritual monitors, your spiritual way-marks, and your Bible, must disappear. With only your heart of sin, and your infinite burden of spiritual necessities, and your immovable fears of eternity, you must endeavour to sympathise with the ignorance, the social evils, the political discomforts, the absence of moral principle, the degrading superstitions, and the foul idolatries under which the heathen live. You are to imagine yourselves fettered by the prejudices of an ignorant antiquity; in bondage to the selfishness of a depraved priesthood, enslaved in body, debased in mind. You are to imagine yourselves reverencing the revelations of Brahma, or Buddha, or receiving the infallible *dicta* of the sage Confucius. You are to watch for an opportunity, when, in the absence of your European masters, you may offer your body to the sacred

Ganges, or to the ponderous wheels of Juggernaut, or, on the forked flames of the funeral pyre, ascend to heaven an acceptable oblation. You are to look into that awful eternity only with the aid of random conjectures—an eternity from which none has returned to disclose its mysteries; and you know not whether in the tortures of its hell, or the long weary transmigrations of its purgatory, or the indefinite joys of its unsatisfying bliss, you shall pass its ages without end. Or, in a worse condition—for *that* heathenism is civilised—you are to imagine yourselves trembling in the temple of apes, or dancing adoringly around the Fetiche, praying to and praising the devil; a victim to the absolutism of a licentious chief, chased by a thousand terrors in your daily intercourse; in danger from unprincipled covetousness, in danger from unbridled passion, in danger from the trial by fire, in danger from the poison-water, in danger from the witchcraft ordeal; the present miserable in vice and folly, and degradation and brutality; the future dark, uncertain, fearful; a God unknown, and yet apprehended; a God sinned against, and yet unappeased; a God who must be approached, you know not how, you know not with what result; and yet, into His dread presence, an irresistible fate each moment drags you nearer.

And then, in the very depths of this darkness, at the very extremity of this ruin, you are to know that a fellow-man—a man who shares all your affections, and feels all your necessities, and possesses all your sympathies—holds in his gift the remedy

for all your woes ; can, in an instant, breathe upon your ear a whisper of liberty through Christ, that shall burst your chains, and make you a prince with God ; can, in an instant, beam upon your soul a light from beyond the grave, that shall make all death-shades luminous, the passage through the tomb a safe and certain highway, and eternity, vast and incomprehensible though it be, a glorious satisfying rest for ever, on the bosom of a Father reconciled. And yet that man hesitates ! Oh, with what intensity of appeal would you throw yourselves at his feet, and plead for the soul whose life hangs upon his charity ! And with what a tone would the heavenly Watchers utter, “As ye would that men should do to you,” while they measured his responsibility, to whom the Lord hath said, “*Keep this man !*”

Souls ! My brethren, did the truth ever fasten itself within your heart of hearts, that these heathen millions possess souls ? Unprivileged, brutalised, yet each man of them shares with you an infinite capability, and an immortality of spirit. Each may become pure and holy as the saints in light ; each may become vile and devilish as the spirits of perdition. You may shrink from the picture of their defilement. It is not strange. But do not let it escape your conviction, that it is defilement and viciousness of souls ; souls as precious, in God’s sight, as your own ; souls, for whom, equally with yours, God’s only Son poured out his life.

And yet, “while thy servant was busy here and there, the man was gone !” *The man was gone ?*

'There was a *soul* lost! And, if the loss was yours, then is it your voice I hear, amidst the muttering thunders of the judgment, extenuating, pleading, "While thy servant was busy here and there, the man was gone!"

"Busy here and there!" For what? To accumulate treasure, for you know not whom. To waste time, strength, health, mental energies, in pleasures which scarcely last while you participate. To teach your children the love of a world, which, even now, is palling on your own taste. To multiply, without end, luxuries which are to blot out the realities of this hard-working world, and unfit you for fortune's fickleness, and your children for this stern life-struggle.

"Thy servant!" What! has the judgment discovered your responsibility to God for these souls? the solemn truth, that your relation in manhood to them, is a relation to God, their Creator and yours? We do not address ourselves exclusively to the sincere children of God, but as well to those who, bearing the Christian name, have not yet appreciated the privilege of that covenant with Christ. Although your present carelessness of the gospel would indicate but a slight regard for the Redeemer, and less for your perilous condition, on the borders of an eternity, without his love, cheerless and dark indeed; yet, do we know well, that Satan and the world would be utterly unable to combine so valuable an offer of the good which earth and time address to your senses, feelings, passions, and ambitions, as could tempt the relinquishment of the

cherished hope, that, in the hour of your extremity, the slighted Saviour may listen to your prayer. Whatever be the practical denial in your life, a truthful inner conscience acknowledges the value you attach to the grace of the gospel. Here, then, and now, were I able to place by your side a heathen so desolate as I have attempted to describe—were I commissioned to assure you, that, without your sympathy and earnest effort, he would perish—though, for yourselves, careless of the religion of Jesus, yet such is your human charity, that for that heathen soul tottering on despair, your every sympathy would be aroused. The eye that never wept over the thought of your own transgression, for him would be filled with tears. The voice that never uttered a prayer for your own forgiveness, would now find earnest supplications for his pardon. For him, the grief and the agony, the fervent supplication and the strong faith—which, exercised this day for yourselves, would save your own souls—would be poured out with no stint, in the fulness of your benevolence. I cannot have done you injustice. Then, these human sympathies, and your consciousness of truth, relate you on either hand; to these perishing men, as a brother; and to your Father and theirs, as a servant, for the discharge of a brother's responsibility.

“While thy servant was busy here and there, the man was gone”—*gone* beyond the possibility of help or recall. They are passing fast as the moments—gone to their own places in eternity. Oh! is there not one here, who is ready, henceforth, to devote

himself, talents, energies, and life, to the work of saving these souls? Is there no one here to bear their condition and destiny on his heart before the throne of grace, and, can he do no more, to wrestle in prayer with God, with the faith of a Jacob, with the perseverance of a Syrophenician, until a soul from among these men has been granted to his effort? Is there no one? Surely, there are many who will offer their gifts to send the gospel, with its message of grace, where they may not personally speak its love. Their faith will prove itself by works. Their charity towards Christ's poor people will inspire the acceptable offering. And the blessing of God will be secured upon themselves, their persons, their substance, and their business, whilst they declare, that they have "been busy here and there," only that, with the interest on their Master's talents, they might "keep these men" for his eternal glory.

O MERCIFUL GOD, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that Thou hast made, nor desirest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereties; and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word; and so fetch them home, Blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made One Fold under One Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit one God, world without end. Amen.

Collect for Good Friday.

NOTES.

Page 9.—For a striking development of this topic, see the first of Grant's Bampton Lectures.

Page 12.—Refer to Rev. xi. 15; Romans xi.; St Matthew xxiv. 14; Romans x. 14, 15.

Page 14.—The Church Missionary Society was founded April 12, A.D. 1799. The first missionaries, Messrs Renner and Hartwig, from Berlin, did not sail for Sierra Leone, Africa, until January 31, 1804. The whole amount collected during the first five years was £2,462, or \$12,310.

Page 15.—The mission of Francis Xavier to India was in 1542. He died very soon after reaching China. Rogier and Ricci followed him in China, 1579. The Jesuit missions flourished in the Indies, and in Central and South America, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.—*Grant, Lect. V.*

Page 15.—The United Brethren sent out their first missionaries 1730–5. In ten years, they had planted missions in the West Indies, Surinam, Southern America, among the Indian tribes of North America, in Greenland, Lapland, Tartary, Algiers, Guinea, Cape of Good Hope, Ceylon. In 1841, they reported fifty-eight missions, two hundred and sixty-two labourers, and sixty thousand converts.

Page 16.—The Society for Propagating the Gospel was founded June 1791. Within a few years they supported thirteen missionaries in the North American Colonies—indeed all the Episcopal ministers who were labouring there, except those in Virginia and Maryland. In 1729, there were eighty parochial clergymen north of Maryland, all of whom were missionaries of this society, except those in Boston, Newport, New York, and Philadelphia. Among the earliest of their missionaries were—

Rev. Mr Talbot.
Rev. George Keith.
Rev. Clement Hall.

Rev. Dr Cutler.
Rev. Dr Johnson.
Rev. Mr Beach.

Hist. Amer. Church.

Page 16.—

The Baptist Missionary Society was founded	1792
The Scotch Association	1793
The London Missionary Society	1796
The American Board of Commissioners for For. Miss., (about)	1810
The Wesleyan Association was founded	1817

Page 17.—The first officers of the Church Missionary Society included its efficient founders. Among these were—

<i>President.</i>	Rev. Richard Cecil.
William Wilberforce.	Rev. John Davies.
<i>Vice-Presidents.</i>	Rev. Thomas Scott.
Sir Richard Hill.	Rev. John Newton.
Vice-Admiral Gambier.	Rev. Josiah Pratt.
Charles Grant.	Rev. John Venn.
Samuel Thornton.	Rev. Henry Foster.
<i>Treasurer.</i>	Rev. Basil Woodd.
Henry Thornton.	Mr John Bacon.
<i>Committee.</i>	Mr Edward Venn.
Rev. W. J. Abdy.	Mr William Wilson.

Page 19.—The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States was founded A.D. 1820. It was adopted by the General Convention A.D. 1835. At this latter date its receipts were £3000, or \$15,000, per annum. Immediately after, the receipts reached £12,000, or \$60,000, per annum. The receipts of the last year were £17,000, or \$85,000.

	Domestic.	Foreign.	Total.
The missionaries in 1835 were.....	51	15	66
The missionaries and teachers in 1847 were	96	50	146

In the same period, the number of the clergy has been nearly doubled. Since 1844, it has increased by one-sixth—

Clergy in 1844	...	...	...	...	1224
„ 1848	...	...	...	...	1433

Page 22.—The Right Rev. Samuel Seabury, D.D., of Connecticut, was consecrated at Aberdeen, Scotland, on November 14, 1784, by Bishop Kilgour, Primus, and Bishops Petrie and Skinner. I am most happy to think that, even by the slight notice which may thus be taken of this event, I shall help to fulfil the determination of the clergy of Connecticut expressed soon after: “That wherever the American Episcopal Church shall be mentioned in the world, this also, that the Bishops of Scotland have done for her, may be spoken of for a memorial of them.”

Page 23.—See Grant’s Lect. I., p. 32.

Page 24.—

The population of the world is estimated at 860,000,000
The number of British subjects “ 123,000,000

Page 25.—See Grant’s Lect. I., p. 32.

Page 28.—There are 330,000,000 of deities worshipped by the Hindoos—three times the number of the worshippers!—*Evid. Reveal. Relig.*, Glasgow, p. 15.